

VZCZCXRO5901
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #1999 1811308
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 291308Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8050
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 001999

SBU
SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/28/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: SADR CITY DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTS NEW CHAIRMAN

Classified By: Baghdad EPRT 3 Leader Ted Andrews for reasons 1.4 b and d

[¶1.](#) (C) Summary: June 26, two days after the tragic Sadr City District Council Hall bombing, local politicians took a courageous and potentially important step forward as the District Council (DC) met to elect Hassan Shama as its new chairman. Over 90 percent of the DC members were present for the June 26 vote. Addressing the Council, the Deputy Chairman denounced the killers and hailed U.S. contributions to the recovery of Sadr City. Future EPRT engagements in Sadr City will include a meeting on June 28 with key tribal and religious sheikhs from the district. End Summary.

[¶2.](#) (U) Sadr City's District Council elected a new chairman and vice chairman on June 26, this was the Council's first meeting since the June 24 bombing. The new chairman, Hassan Shama, remains under medical care and was elected in absentia. Newly elected Deputy Chairman Ali Sewadi presided over the meeting and delivered a strongly worded address to his fellow members and the media. The speech was notable for its sharp denunciation of the malign actors responsible for the bombing, deeply felt praise for U.S. forces, and kind words about the U.S. personnel who died as a result of the blast. Numerous members of the Council expressed their condolences for the loss of U.S. personnel in conversations with the 3rd BCT Commander and the EPRT Leader.

[¶3.](#) (C) In a further sign of headway in our efforts to move forward with Sadr City leadership, June 28 marked the fourth weekly EPRT meeting with prominent tribal and religious sheikhs, as well as key DC members. Discussions centered on reconstruction efforts in Sadr City, the area's fledgling neighborhood guard program, and the state of plans to launch a tribal support council. The meeting took place at the the Iraqi Army's 11th Division Headquarters.

CROCKER